

54. *Treatment of Angina Maligna.* By Dr. BIANQUIN.—Angina maligna has prevailed for several years as an epidemic, at Saint Ouen, arrondissement de Mortagne, in France. It commences generally with a swelling of one tonsil, sometimes both, which ulcerate in two, three, or four hours—the uvula and palatine arches are quickly affected, and all the neighbouring parts become gangrenous. There is little fever at the commencement; deglutition is not very painful, but by the third day it is impossible, liquids returning by the nose; and the patient dies on the fourth or fifth day, when the angina is violent or ill treated. It attacks in general the young, especially those between the ages of five and twenty-five years. The treatment that Dr. Bianquin has found almost always successful, when employed early enough, is bleeding from the arm several times in one day, and even repeated on the following one; emetics after two or three bleedings have been premised, are also useful. The principal remedy, however, is venesection, which Dr. B. employs to a very great extent. He has not found any advantage from leeches. He employs general remedies and counter-irritants, as external applications and gargles; stimulating pediluvia, sinapisms, &c. Of upwards of three hundred patients treated by these means during the last four or five years, he has lost only fourteen.—*Annales de la Médecine Physiologique, March, 1828.*

55. *Phthisis Pulmonalis.*—Dr. GIRAUDY recommends that phthisical patients should be kept in an atmosphere rendered moist and warm by the vapour of water, and the temperature of which should be preserved uniform. He proposes by this mean to calm the irritation of the pulmonary mucous membrane, and he adduces some cases in support of the practice.—*Revue Médicale, October, 1827.*

56. *Treatment of Acute Hydrocephalus.* By THOMAS MILLS, M. D.—“As hydrocephalus in the first stage is accompanied by an inflammatory action of the vessels of the brain, it is clear that it demands the employment of anti-inflammatory remedies. Of these remedies the most important are, blood-letting, cathartics, antimonials, and calomel combined with opium; and these are named according to the order in which they prove most useful. We have, moreover, some auxiliary medicines of considerable value, as the tepid bath, blisters, fomentations, sudorifics, pediluvium, &c.

“In a disease of so dangerous a tendency, it is scarcely necessary to state that the loss of a day, perhaps of an hour, may be followed by fatal consequences. The temporal artery, the jugular vein, or a vein in the arm, should be opened, and the blood allowed to flow until some impression is made on the general habit, and until the morbid actions of the vascular system of the brain are modified or totally changed. That such an effect has taken place may be known by a paleness of the countenance, a shrinking of the features, and a tendency to deliquium; or by a diminution or removal of the heat, pain, weight, or uneasiness of the head. As soon as this is produced, our object for the time is accomplished, and the orifice should be closed. Immediately after, or even previous to venesection, brisk cathartics should be administered and repeated at short intervals; and these I recommend not merely from their emptying the bowels of their contents, but because they act on the exhaling of the entire alimentary canal. Thus we lower the tone of the heart and cerebral vessels, and promote a more equal distribution of the blood.

“Remissions and exacerbations daily take place in this disorder; they occur at irregular periods; most commonly the remission is observed during the morning, and the exacerbation in the evening; but at whatsoever time the exacerbation may return, let it never be forgotten that blood is again to be detracted, and active cathartics are to be again exhibited, until some impression is made on the disease. By these measures, promptly and judiciously executed, there is reason to hope that in the course of three or four days the exaitement of the brain will be considerably abated, or perhaps removed.

" I have mentioned that blood may be abstracted from the temporal artery, the jugular, or from a brachial vein, but it sometimes happens that blood cannot be taken from any of these vessels; in that case our chief dependence is on cupping, or what I generally prefer to it, the application of leeches to the temples, the vertex, and occiput, or behind the ears; they should be applied in large numbers, and the flow of blood encouraged until the morbid actions in the brain are arrested or removed; and we may infer that some impression has been made on the complaint if we find a tendency to delirium, a weakness or fluttering of the pulse, and a shrinking of the features, symptoms often observed to follow the application of leeches, and which show the power of local blood-letting over the action of the heart and arteries. The same method of depletion should be had recourse to on every return of excitement.

" Nor do I mean to limit the employment of leeches to those cases only where blood cannot be abstracted by the lancet. My opinion on this point may be collected from a view of the cases detailed, in which leeches were generally used immediately after venesection, in order to postpone the period of exacerbation, or break the chain of diseased action. I was led to adopt this plan of treatment from observing that these two modes of drawing blood, when successively employed, made a greater impression on the disease than either of them when singly had recourse to.

" As soon as a check has thus been given to the disorder of the head by the action of these several remedies, some benefit is to be expected from the judicious administration of calomel with opium. The good effects of a combination of these remedies seem to depend on their power of equalizing the circulation, increasing the secretions, and exciting the actions of the cutaneous vessels, in consequence of which the congestion of blood in the brain, or in any other organ, is diminished or removed. The dose must be regulated by its effect, the constitution of the patient, and the violence of the attack. Although, generally speaking, it is difficult to induce ptalism in this complaint, yet as calomel in some cases unexpectedly attacks the salivary glands, and produces ulceration and mortification of the fauces, I prefer giving it at first in small quantity, which may be increased at pleasure. In acting thus cautiously we avoid the painful consequences sometimes observed to follow its exhibition.

" The efficacy of opium, united with calomel, depends in some measure on its checking the tendency of the latter to run off by the bowels or salivary glands; so combined, it often procures tranquil rest, determines to the surface, and allays that painful irritation of the nervous system, and of the mind and body, which so uniformly accompanies this disease. I cannot bring to my recollection a single instance in which this remedy, when judiciously exhibited after depletion, was followed by disagreeable consequences; and in cases unaccompanied by great irritability of the stomach, its powers are occasionally increased by the addition of small quantities of ipecacuanha, or antimonial powder.

" While speaking of opium I beg leave particularly to recommend to the consideration of the practitioner the 'watery extract,' a preparation which procures rest, diminishes pain and irritation, and diffuses throughout the frame an agreeable sensation; at the same time it is devoid of any narcotic or nauseating quality, and does not cause vertigo, pain, or a sense of fullness in the head, symptoms so often observed to follow the exhibition of the thebaic extract, or the common tincture.

" Among the auxiliary remedies, the tepid bath holds the first place; its use is often attended with manifest advantage; indeed in some instances the benefit resulting from its employment is as unexpected as it is extraordinary; I have seen it at one time reduce the intense heat and dryness of the skin, at another produce a genial warmth and moisture of the surface, and thus allay irritation, diminish the action of the heart and arteries, and check for a while the violence of the disorder. The tepid bath will prove most serviceable after the employment of blood-letting and cathartics; it should be used twice or thrice daily,

according to the urgency of the symptoms, and the effect produced. The period of immersion is from fifteen to forty minutes, about an hour before which the patient should take a dose of calomel and opium, and while in the bath small repeated draughts of tepid whey or barley-water, in which is dissolved tartate of antimony,\* in doses so minute as not to excite nausea or vomiting; and during this period friction must be constantly applied to the body and extremities with the hand or a soft brush. Blisters are never to be employed previously to depletion, or while there is a high degree of excitement; for under such circumstances, by their stimulating powers, they rather tend to aggravate than diminish the disease. On some occasions they are useful when applied to the head or its vicinity, chiefly on the principle of counter-irritation, and partly by the fluid abstracted from the cutaneous vessels, whereby the congestion of the interior is in some measure diminished. Blisters sometimes afford relief when applied between the shoulders, or along the spine, owing in a great degree to the connexion of the spinal marrow with the brain, and instances occasionally occur where evident advantage proceeds from their application to the extremities. Now, as in these cases I have observed perspiration to follow their employment, the benefit hence resulting seems to me to proceed from their action on the vessels of the surface, and the power they thus possess of restoring the equilibrium of the circulation.

"Here I should not omit to suggest to the faculty the use of the antimonial ointment; the happiest effects occasionally arise from its application to the vertex or occiput, especially in cases which supervene to repelled scabies of the hairy scalp; it is quick in its operation, and produces a pustular eruption similar to the scabies; this is often attended with a copious discharge of puriform matter, which is followed in some instances by almost instantaneous relief of the painful and alarming affection of the head.

"I have made no mention of remedy much extolled by some practitioners, I mean a caustic issue established in the vertex, for I never witnessed any benefit to result from its employment in acute hydrocephalus, nor indeed is it reasonable to expect that in a disease which often runs its course in a few days, benefit can be derived from a remedy which requires the same or a longer period before it takes effect."—*Transactions of the King and Queen's College of Physicians in Ireland, Vol. V.*

57. *Treatment of Chronic Hydrocephalus.* By THOMAS MILLS, M. D.—"Acute hydrocephalus is distinguished by a high degree of arterial excitement; the chronic form by venous turgescence of the brain, an imperfect development of disease, and an unequal distribution of the blood; but as in both forms several modifications and varieties may be traced, due regard must be paid to the peculiarities of every case, as these must necessarily require some modification of the mode of treatment; still, however, the curative process is to be governed by the same general principles, and the same means are to be employed, regulated by the urgency of the symptoms, and the age and constitution of the patient. Blood-letting, general and topical, cathartics, mercurials, opiates, &c. are the principal means to be employed in chronic as well as in acute hydrocephalus; but as in the latter the danger is more imminent from the high degree of excitement with which it is usually accompanied, the most efficient remedies are to be employed with promptitude and decision. In the chronic, on the contrary, the disease is slower in its progress and development; and as the

\* Since this paper was written, (1821,) I have given tartar emetic more frequently, and in larger quantity than formerly, and with decided benefit, especially in the acute form of the complaint. This active agent possesses in many instances the power of diminishing the tone and activity of the vessels of the brain and heart, and thus of breaking the chain of diseased action. This appears from its effects: a sinking of the pulse, collapse of the features, tendency to deliquium, accompanied by cold perspiration, and a diminution of the head-ache, and throbbing of the temples. I was induced to make a trial of this remedy in hydrocephalus from witnessing its good effects in maniacal delirium and other disorders of the brain, arising from a high degree of vascular excitement. The dose varies from one-fourth of a grain to two, four, five, or even ten grains, dissolved in water, to which may advantageously be added, when the stomach is irritable, small doses of the tincture of opium.